

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to the figure. This sheet replaces the original sheet filed with the application. In the figure, elements 9 and 17 have been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

Applicant's attorney thanks the Examiner for the careful consideration given to this case. As explained below, the foregoing claim amendments place the application in condition for allowance and such action is requested.

The matters raised in the Office action are discussed below in the same order as presented by the Examiner.

The drawings are corrected as requested by the Examiner. More particularly, a replacement sheet or new sheet of drawings showing the single figure with the addition of the reference numerals "9" and "17" together with a marked-up sheet showing the changes are submitted. The drawing changes are summarized below.

- The reference numeral 9 identifies the upper run of the conveyor 10 as described at page 3, line 39+.
- The reference numeral 17 identifies the applicator, which comprises an actual product application station 18, a drying station 19 and a wind-up station 20 as described at page 4, lines 19 - 22 of the application.

Turning to the claims, it is noted that claim 6 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 10 with the further addition of "a spray applicator". This further recitation is supported throughout the

application, and particularly set forth at page 2, lines 25 - 27.

Claim 10 has been amended to emphasize the improvements of the invention allowing the product applicator to be "arranged to apply to the web at least one product selected from the group consisting of a surfactant, a binder, a lubricant, a swelling agent, a dye and a printed indicia." This subject matter is particularly supported in the paragraph bridging pages with 1 and 2 of the application. As there noted, these product applicators are facilitated by the prior expressing of moisture.

Newly presented claim 12 also emphasizes the improvements of the invention allowing product applicators to apply product "selected from the group consisting of a surfactant, a binder, a lubricant, a swelling agent, a dye and a printed indicia." To that end, claim 12 provides that the applicator is located downstream from the expressing means. Again, it is emphasized that the placement of the expressing means upstream from the product applicator enables controlled amounts of moisture to be retained in the web and such moisture may be used to enable products to be better applied to the web.

The prior rejection of claims 6-7, 9, and 11 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Publication No. 2002/0157766 to Vuillaume et al. (Vuillaume '766) is overcome by the amendment claim 6 to include the subject matter of prior claim 10. In Vuillaume '766, the applicator 9 is upstream of the expressing means.

It is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 8 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vuillaume '766 in view of Vuillaume '910. Vuillaume '910 is specifically cited in connection with the provision of a vacuum of 400 millibar and, therefore, does not remedy the deficiencies of Vuillaume '766 in connection with the recited "applicator being selected from the group consisting of a foam applicator, a lick-roll applicator and a spray applicator".

It is further requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection under 35 USC 103(a) of claim 10 as being unpatentable over Vuillaume '766 in view of US patent 4,939,016 to Radwanski et al. ("Radwanski"). As described below, the Radwanski teachings do not suggest the use of a lick-roll applicator.

Radwanski discloses a picker roll 30 in column 10, lines 63-66, which the Examiner denotes as "a picker or lickerin roll". A lickerin roll is part of a feed mechanism of a card. A lickerin roll opens up the tufts

of a picker lap as it is fed to the card and transfers the fibers to the main cylinder. The following definition is reproduced the Central America and Asia Business Consultants web site dealing with textiles.

LICKERIN: A part of the feed mechanism of the card. It consists of a hollow, metal roll with a spirally grooved surface containing a special saw-toothed wire. The lickerin opens up the tufts of the picker lap as it is fed to the card and transfers the fibers to the main cylinder.

The web site is found at the following address:

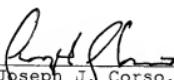
http://www.ca-bc.com/zip_internacional/usedmach/education/l.html

As shown, lickerin roll relates to a metal roll of toothed configuration for picking tufts and fiber. A lickerin roll should not be confused with the claimed lick roll. There is no pertinent relationship explained by the Examiner or apparent to applicant. Accordingly, there is no teaching or suggestion of the claimed lick-roll and the rejection should be withdrawn.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 6 through 12 presently of record are in condition for allowance and such action is requested.

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